Bang Chan Canal bissected 503

the community and joined, about one mile south, Sāensaēb Canal, a broad old waterway connecting Bangkok and Minburī with the canal network of the central plains. A well-raised, year-round road which ran between Bangkok, 20 miles to the southwest, and Minburī, two miles east, cut through one side of the area. On it lay Bang Khūat, another community, about eight kilometers from Bang Chan (cf. Kaufman:1960), and a cluster of houses called "Kilō paet," (Kilō 8) both west of Bang Chan and nearer to Bangkok. A shallow canal flanked this road most of the way.

The town of Minburī with district offices, shops, and pharmacists, and a good-sized Muslim population was well-known to most of the residents of Bang Chan. Its middle school drew from the surrounding farming countryside, including Bang Chan, those few pupils whose educational aspirations led them beyond the local elementary school. Minburī had electricity, but no telephone or telegraph facilities.

For nine months of the year, while Bang Chan lay under water, most of the marketing was done through boat-vendors who plied the canals. During the dry months, or for large festivities, people marketed at Minburī, Kilō paet, or in Bangkok.

The Thai government administered Bang Chan through two district offices (amphoe), one located in Minburī, the other in Bangkapi, close to Bangkok. The common boundary of their respective districts happened to run through the middle of the community. Seven local head men, each in charge of one of the seven hamlets (mūban) into which the entire community was divided reported to one or the other district office. They transmitted instructions from their superiors to the farmers, maintained order mostly by their personal prestige, and kept the village census more or less up to date by recording and reporting marriages, births, and deaths.

At the center of the community was the cherished Buddhist temple with its abbot, monks, and novices, numbering 15 to 50 depending on the season. The elementary public school, occupying one of its buildings,[1] was attended by 300 children aged eight to fifteen, both Buddhist and Muslim. The temple compound was surrounded by a number of houses, including a cafe and stalls for small vendors. A small country mosque (surao) in another hamlet was the religious center for the Muslim minority, some of whose children attended another school just outside the Bang Chan community. The abbot and the imam, the respective local heads of the two religious faiths, were of importance in the community as leaders.

1. A new large school has since been built away from the temple compound.

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[503] Besides the work in rice-fields, women dug and cleaned
[226] canals and ditches, mounded land, and fished in many ways, the most laborious of which was plunging a heavy basket into the mud to catch burrowing fish. In the household chores, in which men shared to some extent, they carried water, cut and fetched wood, tended livestock, cultivated kitchen gardens, pounded rice in mortars, and cleaned houses. Boats were rowed
[501] by paddling or sculled by standing and pushing a single large
[354] oar. Cooking was time consuming. The low stoves were on the
[352] ground or floor. Since there were no tables or chairs, one squatted two to four hours a day to cut or pound ingredients,
[516] stir the curry, or wash the dishes.

868 The training of boys and girls for farm and household
561 work was thorough and started early. By 18 years of age,
461 boys and girls with few exceptions were experienced in every step of farming. Janlekha's chart (1955:82) indicates the progression (parenthetical additions are the present author's):

Age	Method	Kinds of farm work
5 - 7	not forced, but allowed or induced to work if they want to	light hauling, removal of weeds which have been turned over by harrowing
8 - 12	mild pressure	light hauling, removal of weeds which have been turned over by harrowing; some household work and help in the kitchen - girls only - (sometimes boys)
13 - 14	moderate pressure	hauling, weeding, buffalo-tending, transplanting, chicken-feeding, fishing, household work (boys and girls)
15 - 16	high pressure	all kinds of farm work, harrowing, harvesting, and uprooting - boys only - are started at this age.

872 Children worked in the fields before and after school
461 which, compulsory for all children aged eight to fourteen, was held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. five and one-half days a week. Vacations coincided with peak work seasons so children could help in the fields or at home.

000improvement, (1)ngaan sponsored by them might serve to acquaint a large group with a new practice. Suppose, for example, that addition of premix to rice, and cooking rice without excess water were being promoted. If one of the respected priest-practitioners could be persuaded to introduce these practices at his homage-to-the-teacher rite and give them some publicity, this might help to create a favorable attitude toward the suggested change.

Every change will require continuing education, and a variety of approaches should be used, some of which have been [872] mentioned. If the elementary school teachers were persuaded of the importance of a good diet and improvement in sanitation, and had a sound understanding of the desired changes in practice, they could influence both the oncoming generation, and their neighbors through teaching and example. Continued practical health education for school children should ultimately bear fruit. The value of eating more green leafy vegetables should be taught, and the children could learn about leafy greens available in the village, but not widely used at present. Good foods to bring to school for lunch might be stressed. Hard cooked eggs have already been mentioned. If convenience as well as health value were stressed, this might lead in time to increased consumption of eggs by growing children, and ultimately by adults as well. If a simple school lunch program were organized, either on a cooperative basis or subsidized, the inclusion of peanuts would help to increase both the protein and the thiamine content of the children's diets. Though unfamiliar to many of the children, lightly roasted peanuts were enjoyed as a treat offered at the end of the medical inspection. If teachers could influence vendors to prepare and sell more of the snacks which would be desirable additions to the children's food, this would be a gain. Fruit could be stressed for school lunch. At any time of year, a banana a day for each child would probably be possible, and bananas should be emphasized even though their nutritive value is not so outstanding as that of many other fruits. Values of other fruit in season should be taught. The school garden could be used to demonstrate how to grow some of the more nutritious vegetables. Awards for those with the best home gardens could be used to stimulate improvement. Similarly, recognition for improvement in home sanitation might be useful.

In adult discussion groups, both men and women should learn about good food and health practices. The slack period between transplanting and harvest, when people can get about easily by boat, would be the best time for such meet- [212] ings. Since many adults in Bang Chan were illiterate or did not read with ease, very simple teaching material is needed. Association between good food and health must be built up gradually. Appeal to economic and other motives may be used [871] where such motives reinforce the desired ends. The extension method of adult education, just in its beginnings in Thailand,

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

621 631 essentials not atypical of the region. Instead of villages being organized administratively on the basis of natural social groupings and demarcations—that is, social centers and groups with which people feel a primary identification, in Bang Chan's case the local Buddhist monastery and government primary school—so that governmental and social units are isomorphic, they are gerrymandered into highly arbitrary administrative units. Thus the village of Bang Chan is comprised of seven *muubaan* or hamlets, at the head of which are seven hamlet headmen; these hamlets are located in two different *tambon*, or communes (four in one commune, three in the other) headed by two commune headmen, neither of whom lives in Bang Chan; the two communes are located in two different districts headed by two different district officers and their staffs; the two districts fortunately are in a single province, Phranakhoon, the same administrative unit in which the metropolis of Bangkok is located. Yet the people who reside in these varying hamlets located in different communes and districts all perceive themselves as living in the single village of Bang Chan. The fundamental organizational problem here is that since the sources and lines of governmental authority do not follow the lines of the natural Bang Chan community, jurisdictional conflicts and confusions arise to threaten the effectiveness of those community-wide programs that occasionally may be initiated. For example, during a diphtheria immunization campaign in the village (Hanks and Hanks 1955), the public health officer from one of the district offices was reluctant to immunize all the children of Bang Chan on the grounds that some of them came from hamlets outside his district's jurisdiction; he yielded, as the Hankses note, only when a perceptive villager pointed out that if germs knew no boundaries why should he?

Not all villages of the Central region have such real or potential administrative difficulties. (And Bang Chan does not have them too frequently either, principally because the government does not initiate too many community service programs.) However, the basic organizational principle which admits them—that houses are grouped together as administrative "villages" on the basis of conceptual neatness rather than socially functional criteria—is a common feature of the administrative structure of the Central Plain.

621 792 The foregoing account describes some basic culture patterns which Bang Chan shares with other villages of either the region or the nation. In addition to these broader patterns, Bang Chan has certain traits which inevitably refer to local village conditions and contingencies. For example, the most active and viable social unit in Bang Chan beyond the familial level is the order of Buddhist monks associated with the monastery. It is the only organization within the village that has been successful in mobilizing community activity (Sharp *et al.* 1953), although much of this activity has

125 he could write, could only sign his name, or could do neither.*
212 Those who said they could write a letter are considered here to be literate. All others are grouped together as illiterates or on a low level of literacy.

212 The literacy rating was tested for validity as follows: in
Dong Chan literacy is known to be related to age. Ever since
* 872 1935** there has been a school in the community. Since that date
125 school attendance has been compulsory. Attendance has been fairly full for the last twenty years, but most older residents have never had the opportunity for formal schooling.

212 The survey data reflect this correlation between literacy and
* 177 age. Among farmers under 40 years of age, only 16 per cent were
* 178 rated as illiterate or barely literate by the survey criterion; while 59 per cent of those of 40 years or older are rated as illiterate. Thus one can have reasonable confidence in the survey
561 response as a rating of literacy.

TABLE 10. LITERACY OF FARMERS DECREASES WITH AGE

	Age	
	Under 40 yrs.	40 yrs. or more
Literacy		
Illiterate	16%	59%
Literate	84	41
Total cases	(79)	(131)

* 177 Literacy is linked discernibly to acceptance of the motor and
* 178 mushroom growing. The proportion of literate farmers who have tried the motor is twice as high as the corresponding proportion
228 among those who are illiterate. It is less strongly linked to the
241 decision to grow mushrooms, and is, at best, weakly linked to the decision to raise tilapia or to use fertiliser.

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212 * In addition, interviewers asked respondents who said they could write to demonstrate it by writing something on the ques-
402 tionnaire.

[125] ** See Siamese Rice Village, op. cit.

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125
[872]

3.a. Is there anyone from your house who is now attending mattayom school?

1.	Yes	86
2.	No	309

b. Do you have any children who have not yet entered or not yet finished prathom school?

1.	Yes	201
2.	No	188
--	Unascertainable	4

c. IF YES: Do you plan to send any of these children to mattayom school or not, or is it uncertain?

5.	Plans to send	66
6.	Does not plan to send	83
7.	Unascertainable	52

[863] 4. What kind of occupation would please you the most—farming or some other occupation? If some other occupation, that other occupation would please you the most?

1.	Farmer prefers farming	266
2.	Farmer prefers other occupation	85
3.	N. from other occupation prefers his occupation	85
4.	N. from other occupation prefers farming	8
5.	N. from other occupation prefers another occupation	5
6.	Unascertainable	4

5. How is Baan BC-KY in your opinion? Is it a very good place to live, a fairly good place to live, or not such a good place to live?

8.	Very good	71
9.	Fairly good	254
X.	Not so good	4
0.	Unascertainable	4

[276] 6.a. Do you smoke cigarettes or not?

7.	Yes	208
8.	No	118
--	No Answer	7

b. If yes: Would you say that you smoke more cigarettes than most people in BC-KY, less than most people in BC-KY, or about the same as most people in BC-KY?

9.	More	11
X.	Less	68
Y.	About the same	128
0.	Unascertainable	1

T 63 Place of Bangchan in the Administrative Area

In the highly centralized system of Thai administration, the whole country is divided into 9 circles (pharq), 71 provinces (changwad), 414 districts (amphur) and 77 sub-districts (king-amphur), 3,650 communes (tamboi), and some 50,000 hamlets (muban).

CT 621 634 121 In the section on reasons for the choice of the field site (page 32)[a/4] mention was made of an artificial division of Bangchan between two administrative units. By that we mean one part of our "natural" or "functional" Bangchan village administratively belongs to one amphur and the other part belongs to another amphur. The situation will become more vivid when we discuss our "natural" Bangchan village.

CT 621 121 Our "Natural" Bangchan Village

In this study we are not interested in an administrative unit which is often an artificial division, but rather in a "natural" or "functional" village which may be operationally defined as a geographical area inhabited by a conglomeration of people having one or more common social centers.

CT 621 794 872 Bangchan people patronize an active Buddhist religious institution popularly known as Wat Bangchan, and an adjacent government primary school, both centrally located in the community.

CT 621 *128 For practical reasons for ease in statistical manipulation, we assume that the smallest administrative unit --

[a/4] [Erratum: this should read "page 36"---Analyst]

621 *128 the hamlet or muban -- is indivisible, although as a matter of fact a Thai hamlet is actually made up of individuals and families. We proceeded, then, to draw the boundary line of our natural village by first selecting Wat Bangchan as the social center and defining the natural village as composed of all hamlets whose headmen and the birth of whose population patronized this wat. The hamlets thus included were found to be Muban 4, Muban 5 and Muban 6 of Tambol Bangchan, Amphur Minburi, Changwad Phra-nakorn, and Muban 5, Muban 6, Muban 7 and Muban 8 of Tambol Kannayao, Amphur Bangkapi, Changwad Phra-nakorn. For the sake of brevity these seven hamlets will henceforth be referred to as BC4, Bc5, BC6, KY5, KY6, KY7 and KY8 respectively.

• [872] We then checked the list of students enrolled in the primary school which is adjacent to the wat and found that most of the families residing in the seven hamlets sent their children to this school and that only a negligible fraction of the student body consisted of those from other nearby hamlets.

Our "Bangchan Village" may thus be defined as an area within the composite boundary line of BC4, BC5, BC6, KY5, KY6, KY7 and KY8. This is an area of about 6,500 rai (of which 6,404 rai are privately owned), assuming a somewhat circular shape and having as its centers Wat Bangchan and the adjacent Bangchan Primary School (see Map I).

361 312 Across this "Bangchan Village" and through its center runs a main canal, the Bangchan Canal, in a northeast-southwest

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

178 finally, for a few families, took precedence over rice
463 growing. The relative importance of these new occupations remained low, however, since only a few families were needed to meet the village requirements for such services.

434 The establishment of the primary school some thirty
647 years ago opened up new jobs as teachers and janitors for
875 some educated villagers who were given preference over out-
• [272] siders. It should be noted, nevertheless, that at the beginning the primary school teachers were not considered as regular officials and their pay was as low as six baht a month during the prewar years. Even during the war, they did not get as proportionately large a cost-of-living raise as did other regular officials. It was only after the war that they were made regular officials and that their pay rose almost a hundred times to 450 to 550 baht a month with provision for a steady raise to more than one thousand baht
[48] a month. This new occupation in public service also increased with the extension of the central government employment into the rural areas and with improved transportation facilities which permitted an individual to commute daily between his office in Bangkok and his home in Bangchan. Thus, a Bangchan resident is now serving as an educational supervisor in the nearby Minburi District and a few others are on the regular payroll of the government-owned Bangkok wharf.

•243 With the background knowledge of the situation of
464 Bangchan farm laborers previously described in mind, we may
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7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

Age	Method	Kinds of Farm Work
13-14	Moderate pressure.	Hauling, weeding, buffalo tending, transplanting, chicken feeding, fishing, household work.
15-16	High pressure.	All kinds of farm work. Harrowing, harvesting, and uprooting (boys only) are started at this age.

By the time the young are 16 years old, they are already reliable farm hands, although they are still not considered competent enough to participate in the cooperative work to which only the best family workers are expected to be sent. By the time they reach 18 years of age, all males and females should be well trained in all kinds of farm work.

According to the Primary Education Law, parents are responsible for sending their children to school at the age of eight. These children are to remain in school until they are over fourteen years old, or until they have passed Pratom IV.[2] Since school hours start at nine and last until three in the afternoon, children of school age are still able to participate in the farm work before or after school hours. Moreover, most rural primary schools including the Bangchan Primary School have adjusted their vacation recesses to the periods when rice farm labor is needed most -- from August 16 to September 15 which coincides with transplanting period, and from December 16 to January 15 which coincides with harvesting period. It is during these vacations that the upperclass children are expected to contribute their

2. Primary education is divided into four academic years -- Pratom I, II, III, and IV.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

243 857 872 labor to the family farm work. It is also the time for children of families of other occupation to earn their small <u>laupai</u> from piece-working.

872 871 We have devoted a few pages to this topic of training the young for farm work because we think it is relevant to the study of the village economy. While the standard of teaching is generally poor in most primary schools in Thailand and consequently farm children receive rather poor academic education, it has been observed that their training in the farm work given by the family is exceedingly thorough. With the exception of a few bright children who are able to finish Pratom IV in four years and thus are able to leave the primary school at the age of 12, most farm children are kept in the school until the age of 14 because they usually fail in the examination at the end of each academic year and have to repeat once, twice, and even thrice. A good many are obliged to leave school at the compulsory age of 14 without passing Pratom IV. Urban children, on the other hand, usually pass Pratom IV at the age of 10 and are able to proceed on their secondary education at the standard age of 11 when they start their Matyom I. This is because they went to school at an early age and had better teachers at the Pratom level. Thus, farm children usually lag behind urban children in academic achievement. The situation is aggravated by the city secondary schools' practice of using students' achievement by age as the basis for admission decision. As a result, farm children do not

369 87